

## A way with words

At the end of last term, the College was fortunate to have New Zealand writer Apirana Taylor work with our gifted writers and a selection of top English classes. He is a recognised poet, short story writer and novelist who has been the Writer-in-Residence at Massey and Canterbury University, Rangi Ruru, St Andrews' College and Hagley High School. He has been invited to India and Europe several times and travels to schools, tertiary institutions and throughout New Zealand to read his poetry, tell his stories, and take creative writing workshops. He is published nationally and internationally.

During the workshop Apirana challenged the students to write about things they heard and saw, words they created and revisit pieces of writing – like nursery rhymes – to make them their own with a re-write. Below is a poem written in the workshop by Adena Emanuel based on the sounds heard in the class room.

**Comment [I1]:** Hi – perhaps you could consider re-wording. I find this a little difficult to read and left a bit confused. I had to read it several times to get the message. Sorry

*The beat of the basketball,*

*Beat, beat, beat,*

*Bounding the rhythm of a blessed heart,*

*Beat, beat, beat.*

*The tick and the tock of the clock,*

*Tick, tock, tick, tock,*

*Tracing the shutters of an eyelids fall,*

*Tick, tock, tick, tock.*

*The groan of the young and restless,*

*Mumble, murmur, mutter,*

*Grind the gears of the guts,*

*Mumble, murmur, mutter.*

*Footsteps echo the hall,*

*Foot, steps, foot, steps,*

*Falls like the footing of a faultless pulse,*

*Foot, steps, foot, steps.*

*The heavy breath that laps,*

*Laps, lulls, laps, lulls,*

*Soon the heavy breath will fall.*

Apirana worked the students hard, 'squeezing their creative juices'. He showed them how demanding the process of writing can be with its hundreds of decisions about words and images, as well as that first huge decision - when they choose what to write about. As an English teacher, I appreciated the way he reminded them of the importance of only using words that did something – he encouraged them to brutally cut the fluffy, pointless or unwanted words from the page. It was an enlightening experience which we hope to repeat next year.

**Comment [I2]:** Great and to the point

This term sees the beginning of a new project – focusing on the gifted and passionate musicians in the College. Over three consecutive Tuesdays in May starting on May 10th, students will listen to and talk with professionals in the New Zealand Music Industry. These seminars will provide our students with an insight into the real lives of professionals in the music industry. Head of Music, Ross Gerritsen, has invited a group of well-respected and talented presenters to appear – these seminars will both inspire our gifted musicians, but also support the enrichment of senior students looking toward Scholarship Music at the end of this year.

**Comment [I3]:** Here we have totally changed tack without any linkage – do we need some to provide flow? Your call!

The nights will focus on composition, performance and the music industry respectively. On the first night New Zealand composer Gareth Farr and songwriter, Annah Mac will discuss the art of composition. While the following week sees the bassist and guitarist from the successful rock band 'Motocade' and Italian Concert Pianist, Matteo Napoli share their thoughts on performing. On the final night, two representatives from MAINZ, the Music and Audio Institute of New Zealand, plan to speak on the different aspects involved in live music production, recording music and other facets of the music industry.

Gifted projects continue to develop and I look forward to sharing more of them with you all.

JoAnn Wordsworth